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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/032,615	01/02/2002	Tomohiro Matsunai	016887-1060	6006
22428	7590	01/13/2006	EXAMINER CHEN, SOPHIA S	
FOLEY AND LARDNER LLP SUITE 500 3000 K STREET NW WASHINGTON, DC 20007			ART UNIT 2852	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 01/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/032,615

Applicant(s)

MATSUNAI, TOMOHIRO

Examiner

Sophia S. Chen

Art Unit

2852

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5-8 and 10-15 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 9 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 April 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/22/02.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informality: last line, "the roller" should be "the fixing roller". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 9 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
5. Regarding claims 9 and 16, the phrase "such as" and "etc." renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 1-3, 5-8, and 10-15 are allowed.
7. Claim 4 is allowable over the prior art of record; however, it is found to be objectionable for the reason specified above.

Art Unit: 2852

8. Claims 9 and 16 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art of record does not teach or suggest an image forming apparatus comprising a circularly auxiliary member for eliminating electricity being engaged with the outer surface (emphasis added) of a fixing roller and having at least one protruding portion penetrating (emphasis added) a releasing layer to contact and electrically connect to the surface of a conductive roller as set forth in the claimed combination.

Citation of Pertinent Prior Art

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Senba et al. (US Pat. No. 5,045,891) discloses an image forming apparatus comprising a spring for discharging the triboelectric charge of a core metal of a fixing roller.

Sano et al. (US Pat. No. 6,014,539) discloses an image forming apparatus comprising a fixing roller having a conductive grounding brush.

Tomatsu (US Pat. No. 6,137,087) discloses an image forming apparatus comprising a fixing roller having bearings connected to ground.

Kiuchi (US Pat. No. 6,269,230 B1) discloses a fixing device comprising a ground plate.

Hyllberg (US Pat. No. 6,285,006 B1) discloses a fixing device comprising a fixing roller having a conductive roller, a releasing layer, and a grounding member.

Kiuchi (US Pat. No. 6,463,251 B2) discloses a fixing device comprising a ground plate.

Fujino et al. (JP 01-204084 A) discloses an image forming apparatus comprising a fixing roller, a ground plate, and at least one protruding portions of the ground plate contacting the inner surface of the fixing roller.

Tomoyuki et al. (JP 02-105190 A) discloses a fixing device comprising a ground member.

Kimizuka et al. (JP 05-040426 A) discloses a fixing device comprising a fixing roller, a spring for grounding the fixing roller, and the spring contacting the edge of the fixing roller at two points.

Sano et al. (JP 11-074068 A) discloses a fixing device comprising a fixing film, a grounding ring, and a plurality of protruding portions of the ring contacting the inner surface of the fixing film.

Kiuchi (JP 2000-200008 A) discloses a fixing device comprising a fixing roller and a ground plate.

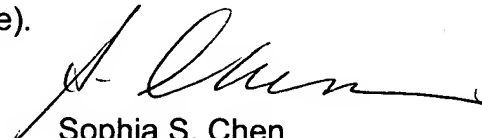
Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sophia S. Chen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2133. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:00-3:00) First Friday Off.

Art Unit: 2852

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur Grimley can be reached on (571) 272-2136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Sophia S. Chen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

Ssc
January 10, 2006